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ABSTRACT

This brief, nontechnical summary of five major evaluation reports is divided into four sections: 1. Pupil Achievement Characteristics: "Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT)", Spring, 1973; 2. Continuance and Transience Among Teachers and Pupils 1968-1973; 3. The Parental Component in Follow Through; and 4. Supportive Services in Follow Through. Achievement data from a cross-sectional viewpoint indicate that total Follow Through performance in the spring of 1973 is better than non-Follow Through performance in kindergarten and first grade, and that the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models show consistently higher performance at all grade levels. Quasilongitudinal analyses indicate a positive effect of combined maximum exposure and Head Start or equivalent experience, particularly in the Behavior Analysis and Bank Street models. Pupil and teacher retention rates continue to be relatively high (60-70 percent for pupils; slightly more than 60 percent for teachers), and the parent involvement component continues to be a priority area. Supportive services data indicate that medical services are most uniformly provided for; psychological services the least so. However, in almost all cases services extend well beyond those provided by the school district. (Author/CS)

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A SUMMARY OF FIVE MAJOR EVALUATION REPORTS ON THE FOLLOW THROUGH PROGRAM IN PHILADELPHIA 1972-1973

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ABSTRACT

This is a brief, non-technical summary of five major evaluation reports on the Follow Through Program in Philadelphia, 1972-1973.

Achievement data from a cross-sectional viewpoint indicate that total Follow Through performance in the Spring of 1973, is better than non-Follow Through performance in kindergarten and first grade, and that the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models show consistently higher performance at all grade levels. Quasi-longitudinal analyses indicate a positive effect of combined maximum exposure and Head Start or equivalent experience, particularly in the Behavior Analysis and Bank Street models. Although longitudinal analyses generally indicate that 1973 scores tend to be lower than 1972 scores, the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models again show consistently higher performance than the other models.

Pupil and teacher retention rates continue to be relatively high (60-70% for pupils; slightly more than 60% for teachers), over the first five years of the program, 1968-1973.

The parent involvement component continues to be a priority area and only 1/18 schools was unable to establish a workable PAC.

Supportive services data indicate that medical services are most uniformly provided for; psychological services the least so. However, in almost all cases services extend well beyond those provided by the School District.

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SUMMARY OF FIVE MAJOR
EVALUATION REPORTS
ON THE
FOLLOW THROUGH PROGRAM
IN PHILADELPHIA
1972-1973

INTRODUCTION

The local evaluation staff prepared five major evaluation reports on the Follow Through Program in Philadelphia for the year 1972-1973. This is a brief, non-technical summary of those documents (listing attached), focusing on the principal findings documented in the larger reports.

The summary is divided into four sections: I. Pupil Achievement Characteristics: Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT), Spring, 1973, II. Continuance and Transience Among Teachers and Pupils 1968-1973, III. The Parental Component in Follow Through, and IV. Supportive Services in Follow Through.

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I. PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT CHARACTERISTICS: METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST (MAT), SPRING 1973

The findings of this section are based on an analysis of program performance on the MAT administered by Stanford Research Institute (SRI) in the Spring of 1973 as part of the National Follow Through Evaluation. City-wide test data were not available for this school year, due to the decision to eliminate the usual testing because of the 3 month teacher's strike.

The following levels of the MAT were administered:

Kindergarten:	MAT Primer
First Grade :	MAT Primary I (MAT-I)
Second Grade:	MAT Primary II (MAT-II)
Third Grade :	MAT Elementary (MAT-E)

The data were examined from:

A) a cross-sectional point of view, comparing:

1) Spring, 1973 performance in Follow Through with approximately an equal number of Follow Through classes in the city (selected for the National evaluation design),

2) Spring, 1972 Follow Through performance with Spring, 1973 Follow Through performance

B) a quasi-longitudinal point of view, comparing:

1) the total cross-sectional group tested in Spring, 1973 by model and grade with those children who received the maximum desirable exposure to the model,

i.e. kindergarten, one year, first grade, two years etc., and taking previous Head Start or equivalent experience into account.

2) the percentage of pupils scoring above the 50th percentile and below the 16th percentile in terms of exposure and previous Head Start or equivalent experience effects.

C) a longitudinal point of view, comparing identical pupil performance in the Spring of 1972, with their 1973 performance based on a locally developed longitudinal data file.

A. A Cross-sectional View: Pupil Achievement Characteristics (Spring 1973 - Metropolitan Achievement Test)

1) Comparison of all Groups in Terms of Mean MAT Standard Score Differences in Spring, 1973

The total Follow Through program achieved higher mean standard scores than the total Non-Follow Through grouping in all three kindergarten test areas; in four of the five first grade areas (all except Word Analysis); in all four of the Math areas of second grade; and in two of the four Math areas in third grade. In addition, the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models were usually significantly higher than the comparison group, in most test areas across all four grades (K-3).

2) Comparison of Spring 1973 Performance with Spring 1972 Performance

In grades K-2 the Total Program, and especially the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models give evidence of almost uniformly higher performance across all test areas. Grade 3 results, however,

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seem to indicate a need for further program refinements.

B. A Quasi-Longitudinal View: Pupil Achievement (Spring, 1973 MAT) Related to Length of Exposure to the Program and Head Start or Equivalent Experience

The total cross-sectional group tested in Spring, 1973 was compared by model and grade level in Total Reading and Total Mathematics with those children who received the maximum desirable exposure to the model, with Head Start experience (Max HS) or without Head Start experience (Max NHS) taken into account

In general, the findings indicate that maximum exposure to the model with previous Head Start experience (Max HS) tends to produce higher achievement across all models, particularly at the kindergarten and first grade levels. The Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models also show consistently higher performance when their maximum exposure groups at each grade level are compared with the Total Follow Through maximum exposure groups at these grade levels. Outstanding differences in favor of these two models occur in first grade Reading.

As a further indicator of overall performance, the percentage of pupils scoring above the 50th percentile and below the 16th percentile in Total Reading and Total Mathematics was examined. The general trend indicates a decrease in percentages above the 50th percentile from kindergarten to third grade, and conversely an increase in percentages below the 16th percentile. Comparisons were also made between the maximum exposure groups (Max) in each model and the one-year-less than maximum exposure groups (Max-1). Overall, the

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findings indicate that the Max groups perform better than the Max-1 groups in both Reading and Mathematics.

C. A Longitudinal View: Spring 1972, Performance Compared with Spring 1973 Performance (MAT)

The longitudinal analysis indicates that 1973 mean MAT scores for both Total Reading and Total Math are generally lower than 1972 scores. However, the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models show both increases in percentage of pupils above the 50th percentile and decreases in percentage of pupils below the 16th percentile.

Comparisons between Max and Max-1 groups indicate that the Max exposure group exceeds the performance of the Max-1 group in all models in either Total Reading or Total Math, and in most cases in both areas.

Regression analyses of Total Reading and Total Mathematics performance in second and third grades in 1973, as compared with first and second grade performance respectively in 1972, again indicate superior performance by the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models.

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II. CONTINUANCE AND TRANSIENCE AMONG TEACHERS AND PUPILS IN THE FOLLOW THROUGH PROGRAM, 1968-1973.

The following data represent the current update of a study, originally requested by the Office of Education, designed to determine the incidence of teacher and pupil continuance and transience in the Follow Through program in Philadelphia.

a) Teacher Continuance:

Of the 306 teachers assigned during the program's first four years, 225 (74%) remained until the end of the 1971-1972 school year, while 232 (62%) of the 373 teachers assigned over the five-year period, 1968-1973, continued in the program through the end of the 1972-1973 school year. Sixty-five percent, however, of the teachers remained since assigned during the second four year period, 1969-1970 to 1972-1973.

b) Pupil Continuance:

A total of 10,380 pupils have been identified as having at least five months' exposure over the five years of the program's existence. Approximately 70% of all pupils who entered in 1968-1969, 1969-1970, and 1970-1971 continued through 1973, and 65% of all children who entered in 1969-1970, 1970-1971, and 1971-1972 remained through 1973. Students with documented Head Start or equivalent preschool experience continued at a rate higher by three to seven percentage points.

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III. THE PARENTAL COMPONENT IN FOLLOW THROUGH

To secure information on the level of parent involvement in the program, 17/18 PAC chairmen were personally interviewed. One PAC chairman had left the program and the evaluation staff was unable to reach her. The interview itself centered around the chairmen's perceptions of the purpose of PAC, its influence as a body on school-related matters; problems in implementation and the relative accomplishments of PAC.

The major findings indicate that only 1/18 schools was unable to get PAC "off the ground". The other schools have been successful in recruiting, on the average, 15 regular PAC members, and approximately 25 parents attend monthly open PAC meetings at each school. In general, PAC has been able to draw more parents into the schools, improve communication between the schools and their respective communities, and break down traditional barriers to the ultimate benefit of the children. It has also been able to influence the attitudes of school staff towards parent involvement and model implementation, influence school policy particularly in the areas of staff selection and budget preparation, and link up with community groups in an effort to improve the environment.

The main barriers to the parental component have been the attitudes of some school staff and principals, and the difficulty in motivating parents to get involved. However, Follow Through has given parents the feeling that they have some influence over their children's education and that they have a right to this. Parents have become more aware of

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their own strengths and values, and have acquired problem solving skills, leadership qualities and interpersonal skills through their involvement with Follow Through. The program has also provided employment and educational opportunities for a minimum of 10-20 parents yearly at each school.

IV. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES IN FOLLOW THROUGH

In an attempt to provide detailed information on supportive services within the Follow Through Program, all agencies and key personnel were contacted, and where possible an individual interview was conducted. In addition, a content analysis was made of all available documents and reports.

The major findings indicate that at all Follow Through schools arrangements have been made for medical services; at 16/18 Follow Through schools arrangements have been made for dental and psychological services, and at 17/18 Follow Through schools arrangements have been made for a paraprofessional Follow Through School Community Coordinator to provide social services to Follow Through families.

It was also found that in all cases but one, the above services extend beyond those normally provided by the school district. However, the availability of these services does not necessarily ensure their continued use. It is difficult to get parents of Follow Through children to make good use of the services available, and broken appointments tend to be a problem. Better use is made of the services when (a) an outreach component is an integral part of the service (b) the school or agency provides transportation and escort services and (c) agency personnel treat patients with respect. Psychological services tend to be the least provided for in that 9 of the 18 schools have no more than one half to one full day of service a week, and at 3 additional schools, services were

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partially discontinued by the contracted agency because of the strike. Finally the greatest promise for establishing on-going and comfortable relationships for Follow Through families seems to be in those services which provide personalized care and a private practice atmosphere.

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SUMMARY

In terms of achievement based on cross-sectional analyses, the total Follow Through population performs better than the total Non-Follow Through population in kindergarten and first grade, in both Reading and Mathematics. At the second and third grade levels this holds true for most of the Math areas, but not for Reading. However, the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models show consistently higher performance across all grades. When Spring, 1973 performance is compared with Spring, 1972 performance only third grade results show a lack of improvement.

With respect to Spring, 1973 achievement as a function of exposure and Head Start or equivalent experience (quasi-longitudinal analyses) the findings indicate that maximum exposure to any of the models with previous Head Start experience tends to produce higher achievement, particularly at the kindergarten and first grade levels. The Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models again show consistently higher performance when compared with the Total Follow Through maximum exposure group. When percentages of pupils scoring above the 50th percentile and below the 16th percentile are taken into account, the maximum exposure groups fare better than the one-year-less than maximum exposure groups, although the general trend is one of progressively lower performance from kindergarten to third grade.

Longitudinal achievement data indicate that 1973 scores are generally lower than 1972 scores. However, results for both the Bank Street and Behavior Analysis models are again more favorable than for the other

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models, especially in terms of an increase in percentages above the 50th percentile, and conversely a decrease in percentages below the 16th percentile.

Teacher and pupil continuance data show that there is a relatively high rate of retention within the program, with 62% of the teacher population and 65% to 70% of the student population remaining over the five years of the program's existence.

With regard to the parental component in Follow Through, although 1/18 schools was unable to establish a workable PAC, the program has provided employment opportunities for a minimum of 10-20 parents annually at each of the 18 school sites, as well as drawing 25 parents on an average to monthly PAC meetings at each site.

Information on supportive services indicates that medical services are most uniformly provided for, and psychological services least so. However, in almost all cases medical, dental, social and psychological services extend well beyond those normally provided by the School District. It was also found that better use is made of the services when the school or agency provides transportation and escort services.

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